



Public Input For Weeks of May 12 to 25, 2001

Date of Comment: May 12, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, general purpose lanes, and TDM.

Comment: Wishful thinking will not change the fact that the vast majority of people will continue to need to drive their own cars, and I am absolutely dismayed and outraged to see the complete lack of recognition of this simple fact in "Proposed Multi-Modal Alternatives" on the mailer I received today. What we need in place of the present bridge is more general purpose lanes, period. The very last thing we need is "aggressive" strategies to manage transportation demand. Seattle's transportation future is beginning to look like California's power supply present!!!

Date of Comment: May 12, 2001

Subjects: Alternativess, HOV lane, general purpose lane, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, mitigations/enhancements, TDM, HCT, and project.

Comment: I just read the May addition of crossings. The progress looks good, but at some time an actual decision must be made. I am struck only the number of times the traffic issue has been discussed and fixed piece-meal. I do hope that the alternative selected will be a LONG-TERM fix and we won't be going back to the well for more at a later date. I can only think of the amount of time wasted on I-405 adding HOV lanes, then Moving the HOV from the outside to the inside lane, then ALMOST straightening the S-Curves and the fact is we have fixed very little. I personally like Alternative 6 but feel that Alternative 5 would work only if the HOV lanes were during rush hours only. If the choice was between 5 and 8, I think the need for HCT far outways the desire of individual's greed to drive alone.

Date of Comment: May 14, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, mitigations/enhancements, and project.

Comment: Proposed re-route of Lake Washington Boulevard to Arboretum Drive: Montlake residents are very opposed to moving the road closer to homes and cutting through green space! Leave it alone, or if it must be moved, move it toward the freeway, where there is already plenty of concrete! Straightening out the road will only make the traffic speeds increase, which will be hazardous to the many bikers, dog walkers and children who utilize Pinetum Park and the Arboretum on a daily basis.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Comment: “existing building”--- Does that mean that these buildings/homes will be eliminated?

Date of Comment: May 14, 2001

Contact Information: Pacific Fishing magazine, 4209 21st Ave. W. #402, Seattle, WA 98199, (206) 216-0111, carol@pfmag.com

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, mitigations/enhancements, and entrance lanes.

Comment: Amy:

I am a Montlake resident interested in the “redesign” of the SR 520 on/off ramp at lake Washington Boulevard (the juncture of Lake Washington Blvd and Arboretum Drive).

I have been told by Peter Marshall and Donald Harris at the parks department that there is a proposal to extend the on/off ramp, and “re-route” Lake Washington Boulevard’s connection to Arboretum drive. The re-route is apparently intended to make the road “more graceful” and straight, but, it would move it much closer to residences and would cut through green space (the north end of Pinetum Park in the Arboretum).

The residents in this area do not see why the city would want to change the footprint of this road! Having a slight bend in it, and the new Stop sign at the ramp, has proven to slow traffic speeds down. Straightening the road out will only enable people to go faster. And there is already plenty of concrete there....why cut into greenspace? What about the families and children who live there and routinely play in Pinetum Park?

If the road does get moved for some reason, how do we encourage the city to landscape the area properly? Thank you for your help! Concerned Citizen, [signature]

Date of Comment: May 15, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, impacts, tunnel, mitigations/enhancements, and right-of-way.

Comment: The proposed realignment of the western end of SR 520 is unnecessary and simply unacceptable. The road should stay within the existing right-of-way, and be aligned to minimize its impact on the neighborhoods it runs through. The curves on the Portage Bay Viaduct are barely perceptible while driving; I have a hard time believing that running SR 520 through Montlake on a diagonal, or under half of Roanoke, will increase safety. Save your money!

Date of Comment: May 15, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, general purpose lane/s, and project.

Comment: Be sure to include an additional northbound lane on the 148th St. overpass of SR 520, for traffic that wants to use the loop ramp to westbound SR 520. This lane was left off of the original bridge decades ago, and is needed now.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, transit, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, HCT, and project.

Comment: At this point, I imagine things are almost nailed down as to options. However, I'll voice my opinion and hope it resound alike with others concerned. Widen SR 520 to 3 lanes each way, divided down the middle by a mass transit bus/rail/monorail solution to/from the eastside. Stops to be made at Lake Washington Blvd., North Bellevue, 148th off SR 520, 156th, and downtown Redmond. West side stops could be Seattle Center, UW, and a park-and-ride to be determined. Hang a bike/pedestrian lane of one or both sides of the expanded SR 520 and away we go. If more is needed, perhaps improved Kenmore/Bothell routes need to be looked at. Thanks for listening.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Comment: I think adding a transit lane in both directions is good. How expensive is it to lid SR 520 on both sides of the lake?

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, HCT, and project.

Comment: Add HCT to SR 520 or do nothing. Anything else will make traffic worse. HCT won't decrease "traffic" (on the bridge) because of "latent demand" but it will give people choices! It will decrease traffic on either end.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, mitigations/enhancements, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and tolls/taxes.

Comment: As a Montlake neighborhood resident, I would like to see noise abatement and environmental mitigation on my SR 520 project. As a cyclist and pedestrian, I would like to see those interests considered and promoted. As a taxpayer, I would like to see any projects paid for in large part by user fees.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, transit, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, HCT, tolls/taxes, and TDM.

Comment: #3 seems more sensible particularly if the HOV is just for transit, bus, bike and pedestrian access, good light rail (if Seattle is ready) or dedicated bus lane (later to be retrofit for faster transit system monorail? Aggressive management of traffic a must! Higher gas prices tax by weight and consumption.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, general purpose lanes, HOV lane/s, HCT, and project.

Comment: Take all proposed money for light rail and use for more roads by adding lanes to existing roads. Forget HOV lanes they don't work. What works is more lanes on existing roads and monorails. Quit wasting taxpayers money on light rail systems that don't work like Sound Transit's light rail.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, general purpose lane, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, HCT, mitigations/enhancements, and TDM.

Comment: The key is to get people out of their cars – option #5 is clearly the best of all worlds; adding more GP lanes makes no sense (more people will drive then – a widely documented fact) – adding an HOV lane makes some sense as it would connect to lanes on both shores; adding light rail & bike/pedestrian access is crucial as it provides alternatives to driving. Remember, in all cases here: if you build it, they will come.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, mitigations/enhancements, TDM and ferry.

Comment: Widening the SR 520 bridge to accommodate more lanes is not an acceptable alternative. This would take more wildlife habitat & further disrupt neighborhoods. Either no action or upgrading to include bike/pedestrian passage (alt. 1 & 2) are the only ones our family would support. Passenger ferries across the lake would be a good idea.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, HCT, mitigations/enhancements, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

Comment: Please consider the following:

The present access to Westbound SR 520 for traffic northbound on Montlake Blvd/23rd Ave E needs improvement. BRT should loop to the UW. Westbound SR 520 should connect directly with the Seattle Center. Pedestrian/bicycle access to the UW from Madison Park via a short stretch of SR 520 would get a lot of students and faculty living south of the ship canal to leave their cars at home. Thanks! [signature]

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, mitigations/enhancements, HCT, tunnel, and I-90.

Comment: NOTE – Initial \$\$ for construction may be high; however total cost plus cost over long time is lowest.

Option 4 preferred

- Sound Transit light rail to be underground
- I-90 light rail surface grade over Lake Washington & East*, then underground west of Lake Washington. A connection can be made underground between I-90 & Sound Transit light rails.
- I know this is BIG \$\$\$; however, 50 yrs, 100 yrs, & longer, least total impact & I'll vote for it.

*I-90 can be underground as much less surface mitigation.

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, impacts, tolls/taxes, interchanges, and entrance lanes.

Comment: 1. Close Points drive to on ramp 4-6:30 PM

2. Sell very expensive passes for meter machine at on ramp for those hours. Sell only to residents. Please respect residents.
 - a. People who live there can't arrive home.
 - b. People headed for Hunts Point can't use Points Dr. during that period due to traffic.

You simply must do something! So far you've accomplished nothing!

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, HCT, tolls/taxes, and project.

Comment: Costs for the north-south light rail line are going out of sight. There will be further delay and further cost increases. Concurrently, the Trans-Lake Washington Project also considers the extremely costly light rail technology. Will these projects bleed the taxpayers dry? Will these projects prevent the implementation of low-cost travel improvements for outlying communities? Is there any kind of coordinated regional planning and funding studies underway? I doubt it!

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, mitigations/enhancements, impacts, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, early action, transit, HOV lane/s, HCT, TDM, and project.

Comment: I support alternatives 3 and/or 7 – these are essentially the proposals offered originally under the public – private partnership, which was voted down by a close vote in Montlake a few years ago. However, I am certainly not in favor of tearing down the old bridge and building a new one; just add on to the present one! Nor do I understand the difference between HOV (which now includes buses) and BRT, now why one is wider than the other? Just, please, action with it! Traffic is getting worse and worse. [signature]
(my husband gets your mailings already)
(We live 1 1/2 blocks from SR 520!!)

Date of Comment: May 16, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, mitigations/enhancements, transit, HOV lane, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, I-90, and TDM.

Comment: Clipped Alternative 5

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Subjects: Alternative, mitigations/enhancements, transit, HOV lane, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, I-90, and TDM.

Comment: Clipped Alternative 5

Date of Comment: May 17, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, mitigations/enhancements, general purpose lane, transit, HOV lane, HCT, and TDM.

Comment: I am a Medina resident that lives about 150 yards from SR 520.

I have been to several meetings/hearings to date and would put the proposed list in the following order (2 best alternatives, 2 worst):

Best - #8 - SR 520 HOV with BRT Conn., GP

2nd Best - #7 – SR 520 HOV with BRT Connections

Worst - #1 – it is silly to do nothing, we are a growing area, we have to deal with growth not hide our head in the sand

2nd Worst - #5/#6 – HCT on SR 520 based on data I've seen is not going to see utilization that makes it worth an exorbitant expense relative to Bus/HOV improvements.

Thanks for your consideration, [signature]

Date of Comment:

May 17, 2001

Subjects: Alternative, general purpose lane, ferry, transit, and public involvement.

Comment: As a person who lives on the eastside and works in Seattle I have the following suggestion for you...

I've heard some talk of a ferry type of boat that used to go between the eastside and Seattle, my guess it this has come up as idea again as a way to cut down on SOV's.....what is the status of this? I live in Kenndale and don't see why there couldn't be some kind of fast boat for walk on traffic used to travel from Coulon Park and other lakeside areas with docks over to Leschi. There could then be buses on a regular schedule to shuttle people straight up the hill with a drop off in the Central Area and then straight on down the hill to downtown Seattle. (Currently I think bus 27 runs up and down this route.) It sure does seem like it would make a lot of sense to travel on the water back and forth rather than building and maintaining more bridges for SOV traffic. I can tell you that I would be the first one to jump on the boat!!!! I think that the state is missing out on a GREAT opportunity, can't something be done in this direction?

I'd love to hear back from you, I wouldn't even mind getting involved in some type of planning around this idea if volunteers are needed. Thank you, [signature]

Date of Comment:

May 17, 2001

Subjects: Impacts and mitigations/enhancements.

Comment: As part of mitigation, PLEASE change the road surface from concrete to asphalt for the entire span from I-5 to the water. We live south of Montlake playfield and the roar in our house, even with the windows closed, is TERRIBLE. In the summer, when we are outside, we have to speak loudly to be heard above the roar. Driving from the eastside to Montlake the road surface is asphalt. It changes just at the Arboretum and you can hear the change in noise level immediately. Why not extend the asphalt, since more people live near the roadway after it hits the Arboretum than when it is in the middle of the lake. Thank you. Also, I'm already on the mailing list so please don't add me. I don't want to get 2 mailings.

Date of Comment:

May 18, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, public involvement, tunnel, entrance ramps, and project.

Comment: "Virtual tour" illustrations are very hard to read. Street names are "virtually" illegible. On the first illustration of the Roanoke section--are the tunnel entrances (finally figured out they are at north end of old steam plant, where Eastlake and Fairview come together)--are

those tunnel entrances one way? If so, which is eastbound and which is westbound? Or are they two-way tunnels, illustrating alternative entrance locations?

Date of Comment: May 17, 2001

Subjects: Project and public involvement.

Comment: Hamie Mendenz, from El Mundo can be reached at 425-443-6397. He would like to talk about advertising.

Date of Comment: May 17, 2001

Subjects: Project and public involvement.

Comment: The June 14th open house date on the web is incorrect. It is listed at Wednesday, June 14th. But June 14th is a Thursday. He would like it to be taken care of, and then he will check back.

Date of Comment: May 21, 2001

Subjects: Project, public involvement, alternatives, and TDM.

Comment: The TDM document you list for downloading is not the TDM document-- it is another copy of the multi-modal alternatives. Check, and see if I'm not right.

Date of Comment: May 22, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, general purpose lane, transit, tolls/taxes, TDM, and public involvement.

Comment: Dear Amy and Jeff:

Here are a couple of other points I'd like to make regarding your Trans-lake project. As freeway traffic will again increase to the point of gridlock after each expansion of capacity, other measures must be taken before increasing capacity, such as:

1. Expand mass transit first.

I think we should be asking folks who come through the neighborhood to do so as quietly and as sensitively as possible. Too many people are already coming through in their SUV SOVs. I'd like to ask them to please take the bus, for their sakes as well as ours. It's the least they can do to be good neighbors to those along their commuting route.

2. Impose demand management first.

Drivers are getting huge subsidies to keep the Evergreen Point Bridge afloat. Drivers ought to bear more of the cost of maintaining (let alone expanding) the bridge, just as ferry commuters are being asked to pay more of the cost of ferry service. Present policies subsidize sprawl at the expense of close-in areas.. I will attend as many of your meetings in Montlake as I can; I probably can't make it this Wednesday.

Thanks, [signature]

Date of Comment: May 22, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, mitigations/enhancements, public involvement, project, and EIS.

Comment: I'll put this in the Flyer. I may pep it up a bit with a headline to try to create some interest.

Unfortunately, I don't expect much in the way of results. I fear many residents have found, as have I, that the open houses and community meetings are utterly stupefying. Where is the opportunity for input? They are presenting plans with no stated criteria; How can we evaluate either their plans or their intentions? We are not highway designers or transportation planners. We cannot offer, or even objectively assess the effects of their plans. What we can offer are the neighborhood's criteria for an acceptable highway and for fair mitigation. I could find no forum for offering such.

I have sent emails and mailed in paper forms, received nice "thank you" notices that probably were form letters for my efforts. Perhaps I am becoming cynical, but I believe that what the Project actually wants when it solicits participation is buy-in, or at least acquiescence.

That is why I am investigating the EIS process. The EIS will have objective criteria. I would like to see some human livability standards put in the EIS. After all, our habitat is as much a part of the environment as that of the salmon, the heron, the eagles and the amphibians whose dwellings will be disturbed by the construction of new lanes and the increase in traffic capacity across the lake.

At the very least, I would like to see the EIS stipulate that ANY adverse impacts to livability in the neighborhood be compensated at a minimum of a dollar-for-dollar rate and that the amount of project funds set aside for mitigation be proportional to the total cost of the entire project. That is, mitigations should compensate the neighborhood (beyond any compensation offered to affected families, businesses and individuals) for the value, as well as the area, of land lost to any additional lanes; for the value of lost usage of lands adjoining any additional lanes; for the value of residents' time and quality of life lost as a result of any increase in cut-through traffic, etc. Further, the more extensive the project, the more extensive the mitigations should be.

For example, the EIS might require that an increase in traffic volume would be allowed only on the condition that total noise, runoff, particulate and air pollution to inhabited areas be reduced.

Perhaps I should write a letter to myself (I think that's called an editorial; I hesitate to instigate that tradition in the Flyer). End of Rant. Regards, [signature]

Date of Comment: May 22, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, mitigations/enhancements, public involvement, general purpose lane, transit, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, HCT, interchanges, and project.

Comment: Mr. Rubstello,

Thank you for your thoughtful and personal response. I have a much clearer picture of the process now, though this picture does not entirely allay my anxiety. One of my chief concerns is that the decision on the number of lanes that SR 520 should have, and the decision on the location and perhaps the modes of rapid transit, will be made separately from any consideration of the livability of the communities most affected by the decision.

This segmentation of the decision process in effect assumes that damage to nearby communities is inevitable and that mitigations can be applied after the damage is exacted to make the community, in some measure, whole again. I think that Montlake is a living example of the failure of the application of this philosophy in the past.

I realize that this is a regional decision. I also realize that this is generally taken to mean that one community can reasonably be required to suffer--in Montlake's case, repeatedly--for the good of the region as a whole. I question whether this assumption is still viable when it is in the power of the relevant State and Regional agencies to create a project that incorporates the livability concerns of affected neighborhoods in the basic design of the transportation solution--from the beginning, not after the damage has been done.

I assert that any decision on the number of lanes and the location and modes of rapid transit on SR 520 must be made with the explicit intention of preventing ANY increase in noise to the surrounding community; ANY further fragmentation of the neighborhoods or disruption of pedestrian, bicycle or vehicular travel within the community; ANY degradation of air quality or particulate levels on a "normal" day; and ANY increased burden from runoff on the storm drain/sewage system or the surrounding lake and wetlands.

These are stringent requirements, but they could be met if they were incorporated in the original design of the project--not laid on as a Band-Aid to staunch (or at least, hide) the bleeding of an already injured neighborhood. Design of the Montlake interchange is not a separate issue to be decided once the configuration of the freeway is decided. The configuration of the Montlake interchange must be determined with the same urgency and priority as configuration of the I-5 and I-405 interchanges. In fact, the effects of freeway changes upon the neighborhoods they traverse should receive the same attention and merit the same engineering and capital resources as other design issues, including the physical and geological support of the roadway and the habitat of salmon, raptors, migratory birds and amphibians.

The public at large may wish only a "yea or nay" vote on the finished product, but I believe that the communities most affected by the decision desire much more than that. Though most of us cannot offer and may not even be able to evaluate alternative designs, we are quite

capable of offering criteria for judging designs. I believe that if you honestly solicited ideas on these criteria, you would find substantial agreement among residents on both sides of the lake. Sincerely, [signature]

Date of Comment: May 24, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, general purpose lane, HCT, tolls/taxes, I-90, and project.

Comment: As one who grew up on Evergreen point, and stands to build on a waterfront lot, I find the proposed so-called improvements to SR 520 absolutely criminal.

The committee needs to stop looking at the congestion on SR 520 and I-90 individually. The state could add 80 lanes across these routes, and they would still back-up, due to limitations of the primary destinations: Montlake and I-5 to the west and Microsoft and I-405 on the East.

While I currently reside in Houston, I still vote registration in King County. Houston suffers similar issues, and the fact of the matter remains that no matter how many lanes are added, traffic will congest at bottlenecks. Lanes, Tolls, Traffic won't cause significant reductions in volume. Move "where the jobs are" and commuting patterns will be affected.

Basically, by expanding the lanes into prime real estate of Medina and Montlake, the project jeopardizes property values of neighboring lots. Seeing as these are among the wealthiest people in the state, this errant pipe-dream will wind up costing tax-payers millions of dollars while homeowners tie the state up in legal battles.

Bottom line: The window of opportunity for affecting gridlock was lost 30 years ago when the State neglected to create a sufficient Northern Route.

We have to live with these mistakes, but we can't afford to compound the mistakes by spending money on expansion that only exacerbates bottlenecks at the ends of the corridors.

I urge you to stop the madness now and focus on simply maintaining quality and safety of current roads. Instead of expanding SR 520 to include more lanes, start planning for gridlock issues in expanding areas in the far South and East areas of King County by looking at rapid transit alternatives and addressing potential bottlenecks.

Date of Comment: May 25, 2001

Subjects: Alternatives, impacts, early action, and project.

Comment: Our traffic problems are obvious. We've waited far too long and haven't done much about it. Hopefully, the residents in the neighborhoods on both sides of Lake Washington can understand that our highway system needs to adapt to the growth. Yes, some people have lived in those neighborhoods 25+ years. However, to benefit the region as a whole, as well as future generations to come, residents need to be open to the ideas of the expansion of SR 520. The truth is painfully obvious: Something needs to be done, and it needs to be done now, with minimal impact to the neighborhoods in the SR 520 corridor. People are concerned with the disruption of their lives and property if SR 520 is expanded. But, just imagine the disruption that would happen if we continue to do nothing to solve our transportation problems.
